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# HISTORY OF THE LITTLE FAMILY

BY

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PLAINFIELD, INDIANA





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*Yours truly  
James A Little*





ANNA-(LITTLE) McKNIGHT





## PREFACE.

I always thought that a history of the Little family would be of sufficient interest to justify some one of the family to make the attempt to write it up before the older members are dead, and the history lost. I have urged the matter for a number of years, but could not succeed in getting anyone to take much interest in the matter. And as a last resort, I concluded to make the attempt myself. My history may not be perfect, but I am sure it is as near correct as it is possible to write it under the circumstances. It has required a good deal of time and labor to untangle the information we have and get it in line. All I ever hoped to accomplish was to commence by giving the earliest history, and then bring it down to Alexander Little's family, with the hope that each family would continue their branch of the Alexander Little tree, independent of the other families. It would not be expected that I would be able to continue the story further down than the history of Alexander Little family, from the fact that the matter would become very complicated. I hope that none will think that my history is personal. I claim no credit myself; I am only transmitting information that I received from Aunt Anna McKnight. She was the eldest child of Alexander Little. She was born in 1801. She had a remarkable memory; she seemed never to have forgotten anything she ever learned about the family from her early childhood. Her grandfather, Thomas Little, it is stated, took a great interest in relating to the younger set, reminiscences of his early life,



and Anna was a great listener—never forgot what her grandfather told her in his Scottish brogue. She was a good talker and her mind was well stored. She took a great delight in relating to interested persons things that transpired in pioneer days. I have listened to her for hours with great interest. A short time before her death I prevailed on her to put in manuscript all she remembered about the early history of the Little family. It was written in a very disconnected manner, but quite comprehensive, so I offer no apology for writing a history of the Little family.

JAMES ALEXANDER LITTLE





## History of the Little Family.

Thomas Little was born in Scotland in 1740, and died in Franklin county, Kentucky, Dec. 5, 1814. His forefathers were of old Presbyterian stock. They left Scotland and went to Ireland because they were persecuted and were compelled to pay taxes for the support of the church. They believed that everyone should be allowed religious liberty and worship according to the dictates of their conscience. The same reason that caused the Pilgrim Fathers to cross to America on the Mayflower was the reason they left Scotland and went to Ireland. They were expecting to find more religious freedom, but they were disappointed. They found the same laws confronting them that caused them to leave Scotland. We have no account of any of the family leaving Ireland, excepting Thomas, who grew to manhood and married an Irish girl. In the course of time they had eight children, who were all born in Ireland but three; they were born in Virginia. They became dissatisfied in Ireland and resolved to try and make their way to America. They were in humble circumstances and could not raise enough money to pay their passage across the ocean, so they were compelled to make a great sacrifice. The law at that time allowed emigrants to sell or bind one of the family as security until the debt was paid. So they sold Mary, their old-



est child. They settled in Rockbridge county, Virginia, and it was not long until the remainder of the debt was paid and Mary set at liberty. Virginia was a new country and they had very trying times. The country was a vast wilderness and but little land had been cleared. Wild animals, such as bear, deer and turkey, were plentiful. The country was but thinly settled. The Indians were bold and savage. They would steal the settlers' horses. The white people had to gather together in forts as a matter of protection.

Thomas and family remained a number of years in Virginia, and then moved to Mercer county, Kentucky. They had no wagons, so they crossed over the mountains on pack horses. All their goods were strapped on the horses. Large sacks with a pocket in each end were thrown across the horses with hoops to hold the pockets open. Two or more children were stowed in each pocket with their heads sticking out on either side. A larger child rode astride to guide the horse, and a small one rode behind. It seems strange in this day, but I suppose such scenes were common in those days. The family all left Virginia and went to Mercer county, Kentucky, excepting Mary. She got married and there is no account of her leaving Virginia. The names of Thomas Little's sons and daughters were Mary, Nancy, Jane, Sally, Thomas, John, Betsy and Alexander. Nancy married John McCasky, Sally married Robert Roland, John married Betsy McBride, Peggy married Thomas Ayers, Jane married Joseph Prewitt, who died in Mercer county, Ky., May, 1886. Thomas Little and wife





and Alexander, and John McCasky moved to Franklin county, Ky. Alexander married Rachael Robinson. They all remained in Mercer county many years and all died there but Nancy, Sally and Alexander. Sally went to Boone county, Missouri and died there.

Thomas Little and wife and younger child, Alexander, moved to Franklin county, Ky. Thomas spoke with a Scottish brogue. His wife's maiden name was Mary Campbell. Alexander Little married Rachel Robinson. Her mother married a man of Irish descent by the name of McCopin, but her maiden name was Ann Little. Her lineage ran back to the Thomas Little family in Scotland where they were distantly related. It was a strange coincident, but it just happened so. Ann came direct to America from Scotland without any knowledge of the Thomas Little family, who came to America by way of Ireland, where they settled when they left Scotland. So the Little family of America are inbred Scotch-Irish stock. Alexander Little once owned a slave in Kentucky. He took him on a debt, and then set him free. The old negro was a cooper by trade. Alexander Little moved to Washington county, Indiana. He bought land and built a double room log house. His land lay just to the northwest of Canton, which was laid off after he went there. The old house has not been torn down very long. I saw it several years ago and the port holes were yet to be seen where they could shoot out at Indians in case of an attack. I am in possession of the gun-rack that Alexander Little made, that was nailed over the door with nails made by a blacksmith. The place



was known as the Robert Green farm. When Alexander Little settled there the Indians were quite troublesome for several years. There was a militia organized and Alexander Little was a Lieutenant and afterwards a Major. He was elected Associate Judge and served one or more terms in the legislature under Territorial government. His first term was in 1810. After the State was organized and the Capitol moved from Corydon to Indianapolis he served another term in the legislature. On or about the year of 1823 he came out and bought considerable land 16 miles from Indianapolis, where the National road was afterwards located. He did not move his family out from Washington county until the fall of 1830; but he went back and forth on horse back and had land cleared. He planted out an orchard of the choicest grafted apple trees. He took great pride in cultivating his trees. It was a model orchard of that day.

He was elected one term to the Senate from Hendricks county and rode a horse, back and forth to Indianapolis. He built a large double log house just east of where the old brick house now stands. The first school house built in Hendricks county was built on his land about the year of 1824. It was built one-half mile south of where Cartersburg now is on land now owned by Alonzo Little. The school house was of logs. It had a large fire place and a stick and mud chimney in the west end. A log was cut out on the north side and greased paper instead of glass lights, a clapboard door in the southeast corner, a puncheon floor and seats split





out with legs put in by boring holes with a large pod auger. Alfred Wagoner was the last pupil who attended the first school ever taught in Hendricks county. He lived to be 93 years old. He died in 1892 in Plainfield.

A short time before his death the writer took him and Uncle Samuel Little out to locate the exact place where the school house stood. In the course of three or four years after, Alexander Little moved to his land, he built what was then considered a fine brick house and kept tavern for many years. The large square sign read ENTERTAINMENT, BY A. LITTLE. It was a favorite stopping place for teamsters and movers. His house was crowded almost every night with travelers. THE OLD JUDGE'S TAVERN WAS KNOWN FAR AND NEAR. It was not long after he moved to Hendricks county until all of his children moved and settled in the surrounding country. Alexander Little died in Hendricks county, Indiana, July 26th, 1849, Rachel, his wife, died September 7th, 1854, they are buried in the Irons cemetery. I will give the names of all of Alexander and Rachel Little's children, date of their birth, who they married and number of children born to each. There were twelve children, seven daughters and five sons.

Anna, born August 27th, 1801, married Robert McKnight, three children were born.

1. Polly, born January 20th, 1803, married James Green, ten children were born.

Patsey, born October 30th, 1804, married John Zarling, ten children were born.





Betsy, born May 4th, 1806, married John Canary, three children were born.

John, born April 12th, married Nancy Rawlings, ten children were born. Second wife, Jane Beasley, seven children were born to this union.

Samuel, born April 26th, 1810, married Rebecca Green, eleven children were born. Second wife was Ann McKnight, no children was born to this union.

Rachel, born June 24th, 1812, married James Richardson, twelve children were born.

William, born March 5th, 1814, married Sarah Downard, eight children were born. Second wife was Sarah Lee and two children were born.

Rebecca, born April 24th, 1816, married Joseph Wines, four children were born. Second husband, Jacob Welch, one child was born. Third husband, Aston White, five children were born to them.

Joseph, born February 28rd, 1818, killed at eighteen years of age by being thrown from a horse.

Robert, born December 23rd, 1819, married Mildred Thompson, two children were born. Second wife was Mariah Worth, to them five children were born.

Sarah Jane, born October 22nd, 1822, married Joseph Simpson, one child was born. Second husband was John Wilhite, no children. Third husband was Milton Brown, no children. Fourth husband was James Hinkle, no children. Sarah Jane is the only living child of Alexander Little at the present time, August 1905.

After Alexander Little settled in Hendricks county he engaged in the mercantile business, he kept a store





eral store and supplied the surrounding country with about everything they were in need of. His store was situated near the southwest corner of where the old brick house now stands, his customers lived several miles in all directions from the store.

The last wheat Alexander ever harvested was cut with sickles. It was about that time the cradle was introduced, which was a great novelty. I remember how neighbors collected at my father's to see the cradle operated the general conclusion was that it was perfection that no improvement could be made on it. But Alexander Little was rather prejudiced against the cradle it wasted too much wheat.

Alexander Little purchased the first cooking stove ever introduced in the county. As I remember it was a clumsy affair. The plates were half-inch thick. Previously a tin reflector was used.

Alexander Little had the first iron pitch fork he had it made by a blacksmith. It had two prongs as large as a man's fingers. The pitcher always used it. All other forks and rakes were wooden and home made.

Alexander Little owned the first carriage ever used in the county. It was made to order by Murphy, of Bellville. It had wooden springs. It was built very heavy and strong and had a top supported by corner posts. Old Bawly was the only horse hitched to it.

Alexander Little was first to introduce the tomato, but he never lived to see it cooked. They were large and corrugated, and were called LOVE APPLES.

Alexander Little had a large development of order.





Everything had to be done with precision. He never allowed a job to go unfinished. He was a man of medium height, rather spare built, but well proportioned. He was a fair conversationalist. He was fairly well posted in history. He had a very good library of well selected books, such as Byron, Shakespeare, Dickens' works and many other books of a high order. His mind run on intellectual subjects, but he often indulged in telling witty stories and sometimes got off dry jokes. His judgment was frequently sought by his acquaintances.

When Alexander Little moved to Hendricks' county, Indiana, he belonged to the Cumberland Presbyterian church, and a camp ground was located on his land one half mile south of Cartersburg by that church, on the spot now occupied by Holderman's barn, but slightly to the southwest of it. A few years later, about the year 1834, Alexander Little joined the Methodist Episcopal church at Belleville, and was a member until his death. He had a wall sweepers clock made to order at Salem before moving to Hendricks county. It had wooden works. It gave the hour, the week, the month and changes of the moon. My recollection is that it cost one hundred and fifty dollars. He died when he was seventy years of age. His death was caused by consumption. I remember he had a hacking cough for several years.

So in conclusion I will say, all things considered, that Alexander Little (Judge Little) was the GRAND OLD MAN of the Little family, and will be so considered by future generations of the family.





## A STATEMENT.

The object of the writer in leaving a part of this booklet blank is that each branch of the Little family may continue the history in writing (or otherwise) their branch of the family, independent of the other branches, throughout unborn generations. This is the sincere desire of the writer.

Yours truly,

JAMES ALEXANDER LITTLE.

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